

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Chairwoman, House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Defense  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Ranking Member, House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Defense  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair McCollum and Ranking Member Calvert:

As you consider funding allocations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, we respectfully request that the House Appropriations Committee sustain the current funding level of \$24 million for the United Service Organizations (USO). Sustaining this funding level will directly support the USO's current global operations and allow the organization to continue supporting our nation's service members and their families.

The USO is a congressionally chartered, not-for-profit organization that was established at the beginning of World War II by President Franklin Roosevelt for the purpose of providing programs and services to members of the United States Armed Forces and their families throughout the world. The USO currently operates in more than 275 locations across the United States and worldwide and served military service members and families more than 5.2 million times in 2021. The USO serves alongside the military in more than 60 locations across Europe, Southwest Asia and the Pacific, including remote locations such as Djibouti, Greenland, Guam, Honduras, Niger, Poland and Romania, as well as service members who were deployed to support Afghan refugee relief efforts. The USO also provides support during NATO training exercises and along the DMZ.

In recent months, the USO has also significantly ramped up its support for service members who have been deployed to Eastern Europe in response to the war in Ukraine. Due to the unique nature of this response, many of the U.S. service members in Eastern Europe have no access to cell phones and laptops. The USO has been providing service members with Wi-Fi, call centers and pre-paid phone cards to provide a connection to loved ones back home. The USO has also shipped USO care packages, including hygiene kits with essential toiletries and snack packs (35K deployed as of 3/28/2022); games and sports equipment; hot meals; blankets, hats and hand warmers to those operating in cold environments. USO centers stateside are also providing essential support to military families here at home with community-building activities, providing opportunities to communicate with deployed loved ones and warm meals.



From FY 2008 through FY 2020, the annual Department of Defense Appropriations Act included \$20 million to support the USO's mission without interruption. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, H.R. 133, increased the USO's grant from \$20 million to \$24 million to reflect the significant expansions the USO has faced in mission and service. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, H.R. 2471, sustained the USO's grant at the \$24 million funding level. Since 2008, the USO's global footprint has more than doubled from 110 locations to more than 300 locations, driving a 93 percent increase in mission-focused operating expenses. The \$24 million grant currently constitutes approximately 25 percent of the USO's annual expenses for field operations, programs and entertainment for service members and families.

The USO receives no additional financial support from the government. The balance of its funds, currently 75 percent, come from private sources. None of the grant is used for overhead; every dime is used for military service members and their families. The USO provides services worldwide through its network of nearly 800 employees, 30,000 volunteers, and two million active donors.

For 81 years, the USO has been our nation's leading organization to serve and support the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend our country. To ensure the USO can continue to provide vital support to our nation's servicemembers and their families, we respectfully request that you sustain the current funding level of \$24 million for the USO in FY 2023. This funding level will ensure the USO can continue to support our service members, their spouses, and their families through their journey of service.

Sincerely,



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Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



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Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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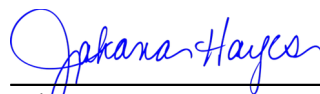
Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress





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William R. Timmons IV  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



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Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



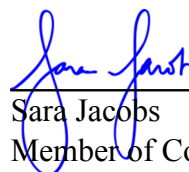
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Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



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Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



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John Katko  
Member of Congress




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Ted Budd  
Member of Congress



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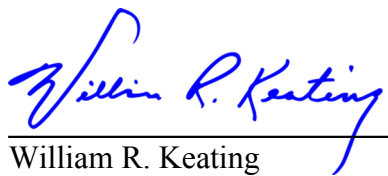
Tom O'Halleran  
Member of Congress



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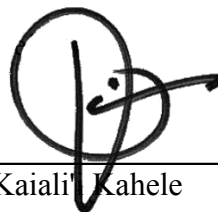
Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress





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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Kaiali'i Kahele  
Member of Congress



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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress



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Earl L. "Buddy" Carter  
Member of Congress



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Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



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Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



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Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



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Madison Cawthorn  
Member of Congress



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Andrew R. Garbarino  
Member of Congress





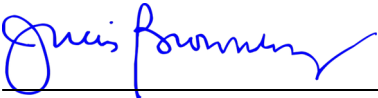
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Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



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Barry Moore  
Member of Congress



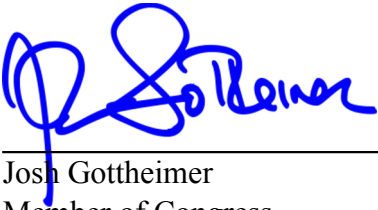
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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



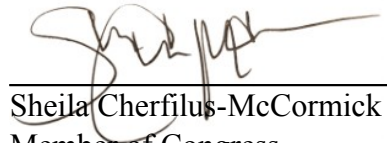
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Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



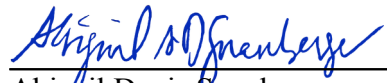
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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Jerry L. Carl  
Member of Congress